

(Washington, DC) This afternoon, Congressman Charles Gonzalez, Chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) Task Force on Civil Rights, Congresswoman Linda T. Sánchez, the only Latina member of the House Judiciary Committee, and Congressman Jose Serrano, a member of the CHC Civil Rights Task Force, issued the following statement on the introduction of an amendment by Senator Mitch McConnell as the Senate debates an immigration reform bill. McConnell's amendment would require voters to show an official identification card at voting polls.

"Unfortunately, this amendment calls to mind historical attempts to disenfranchise and violate the civil rights of low-income and minority voters," said Congressman Gonzalez. "Our country has decided time and again that a voter ID card, like the poll tax before it, unfairly keeps the economically disadvantaged away from the polls. In many cases, these voters do not own cars and would have no reason to own drivers licenses."

"While we in the House of Representatives failed to stop our chamber from passing a mean-spirited, flawed immigration reform bill, the leaders in the Senate from both parties have been able to beat back poisonous amendments to their bill," said Congresswoman Sánchez. "I hope that the Senate will once again defeat this amendment, which I can only imagine is another misguided attempt to derail the entire reform process."

"I am appalled that anyone would attempt to use an immigration bill to roll back hard-won civil rights," said Congressman José E. Serrano. "The McConnell Amendment speaks volumes about the shameless political posturing that has surrounded this debate, and I hope that cooler heads will prevail. If they do not, it will be a sad day for civil rights and American democracy."